

God Makes an Eternal Covenant with David

2 Samuel 7

2 Samuel 7 - "Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around, ² that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains." ³ Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you."

⁴ But it happened that night that the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, ⁵ "Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: "Would you build a house for Me to dwell in? ⁶ For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle. ⁷ Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?'" ⁸ Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. ⁹ And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who are on the earth. ¹⁰ Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, ¹¹ since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house. ¹² "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. ¹⁵ But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."'" ¹⁷ According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

¹⁸ Then King David went in and sat before the LORD; and he said: "Who am I, O Lord GOD? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? ¹⁹ And yet this was a small thing in Your sight, O Lord GOD; and You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come. Is this the manner of man, O Lord GOD? ²⁰ Now what more can David say to You? For You, Lord GOD, know Your servant. ²¹ For Your word's sake, and according to Your own heart, You have done all these great things, to make Your servant know them. ²² Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears. ²³ And who is like Your people, like Israel, the one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name—and to do for Yourself great and awesome deeds for Your land—before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and their gods? ²⁴ For You have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; and You, LORD, have become their God. ²⁵ "Now, O LORD God, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant

and concerning his house, establish it forever and do as You have said. ²⁶ So let Your name be magnified forever, saying, 'The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel.' And let the house of Your servant David be established before You. ²⁷ For You, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, have revealed this to Your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore Your servant has found it in his heart to pray this prayer to You.

²⁸ "And now, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant.

²⁹ Now therefore, let it please You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue before You forever; for You, O Lord GOD, have spoken it, and with Your blessing let the house of Your servant be blessed forever."

Background Notes

In 2 Samuel 6 David finally brought the Ark of the Covenant up to Jerusalem, the new capital of Israel, in a way that was pleasing to God. At first David had tried to transport the Ark on a cart, but this wrong decision resulted in Uzzah's death. The problem was that David was using a Philistine method to do the Lord's work. God had clearly told His people how the Ark of the Covenant was to be transported. It was to be carried on poles, on the shoulders of the Kohathites of the priestly tribe of Levi (Numbers 4:15). The Lord's work must be done in the Lord's way!

After some delay, David used the proper method of transport, and he brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem with great celebration and rejoicing. 2 Samuel 6:17 says that they brought the Ark of the Lord and set it in its place in the midst of the tent that David had prepared for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord.

The tent that David pitched in Jerusalem for the Ark of the Covenant was **not** the Tabernacle; it was a special tent that David erected specifically for the Ark. 2 Chronicles 1 states that the Tabernacle remained at the high place in Gibeon, which was 6 miles northwest of Jerusalem, while the Ark of the Covenant remained in the special tent in Jerusalem until it was moved into the Temple of the Lord, after the Temple was built by King Solomon. David's desire was to build a Temple to house the Ark of the Lord, but this was not God's plan for David. God's sovereign will was that David's son, Solomon, would build the temple.

Doctrinal Points

1. God honors right motives even when they are not in line with His perfect will.

When David first shared his concern for building a "House" for the Lord, Nathan the prophet encouraged David to go for it, and follow through on these good desires and plans. But then God revealed to Nathan that David was not the one who was to build the Temple; it would be built during more peaceful times during the reign of David's son, Solomon. We get a little more insight on this from what David said to the people of Israel near the end of his life, in 1 Chronicles 28:3: *"But God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for My name, because you have been a man of war and have shed blood.'"* So, God's will was that the Temple would be built during the peaceful reign of Solomon.

God asked Nathan to tell David that there was no rush to build the Temple - God had not asked the people to build Him a house of cedar (v7). After all, for about 400 years, ever since the time of the Exodus, God had been dwelling in the midst of His people in the Tabernacle, which was really only a tent. The Tabernacle had been designed by God Himself and had served God's purposes, so there was no need to rush into building a Temple for the Lord. Construction could wait until the peaceful reign of King Solomon.

Nathan was also to inform David that even though he was not to build the Temple, God had special plans for David. David would not build a House for the Lord, but the Lord would build a "House" for David. David had been handpicked by the Lord to be king over Israel, and God had blessed David and made him successful as a king. Now God was making an unconditional covenant with David and his descendants. God said that even though Solomon would have to be disciplined when he sinned, the covenant was permanent, and God's love would never be taken away from him. David's dynasty would continue forever! This promise that God made to David is known as the Davidic Covenant. This covenant is completely fulfilled in Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, who will reign forever.

Psalms 89 refers to the permanence of the Davidic Covenant: *"I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 4 'Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations.'" Selah (v3-4). "Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me," (v35-36)*

So even though David's desires and motives to build a Temple were not in line with God's perfect will, God blessed David and honored him because his heart was right. David's desires and motives were honoring to the Lord. The same is true for believers today. You may have all kinds of good ideas and plans for a new ministry or a new program that would honor the Lord, but the Lord may say to you, as He said to David, "Not you - and not now." If this happens to you, don't be disheartened or discouraged! The Lord will bless you and honor you for your good desires and right motives. God honors right motives even when they're not in line with His perfect will.

2. God honors right responses to the revelation of His perfect will.

Verses 28-29: *"And now, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant. Now therefore, let it please You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue before You forever; for You, O Lord GOD, have spoken it, and with Your blessing let the house of Your servant be blessed forever."*

When David was told that he was not to build the Temple, he didn't get angry. He didn't argue with God and try to change God's mind. He just humbly accepted and submitted to God's revealed will. What a great attitude! Do we have the same humble attitude that will say, *"Who am I, O Lord GOD? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far?"* The chapters ahead reveal that after David accepted the Lord's plan for his life, he did what he could to pave the way with preparations for Solomon to build the Temple, including the gathering of materials.

What about us? Do we have the right response to the revelation of God's perfect will for our lives? We might say, "Well, it was easy for David, because what God made promises to David about the future." But that's just the point! Think of all the wonderful promises that God has made to us about our future - but unfortunately, we tend to want everything to go our way, right away, in the "here and now." We don't always have the proper humble attitude when God makes it known that our present good plans and desires and motives are not His perfect will for us. Let's try to follow David's attitude. God honors right responses to the revelation of His perfect will.

Practical Application

Let your house convict you!

Verses 1- 2: *"Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around, ²that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside a tent."*

When David looked at his beautiful new palace, and then looked at the simple tent that was housing the Ark of God, he was convicted! He wanted to do something for the Lord. This was a good reaction. By the way, we know from the archaeological excavations of what appears to be David's palace that it was no small insignificant building. No wonder David was convicted!

What about us? When we look at our homes, and how the Lord has blessed us with material possessions, and then we look around at the on-going needs of the Lord's work, are we convicted? Are we convicted and motivated to do more and to give more to the work of the Lord? *Let your house convict you!*